

OGC 61-0286

23 February 1961

MEMORANDUM FOR: Director of Central Intelligence

SUBJECT: Hearings of the House Rules Committee on House Concurrent Resolutions 3 and 9 to Establish a Joint Committee on Intelligence Matters

1. This memorandum is for information only.
2. On this date I attended, as an observer, the hearings of the House Rules Committee on H. Con. Res. 3 and H. Con. Res. 9 to establish a Joint Committee on Intelligence Matters. These resolutions have been introduced by Representatives Edna Kelly (D., N. Y.) and Leonard Farbstein (D., N. Y.).
3. The full committee was present. (A list of the committee membership is attached.) The only witness to appear was Representative Clement J. Zablocki (D., Wis.), who has also introduced joint committee measures. In opening today's hearings, Chairman Smith referred to these resolutions as measures to "investigate the intelligence agencies."
4. Mr. Zablocki said that his interest in intelligence stemmed from his membership on the Foreign Affairs Committee and various trips which he has taken abroad. He feels that the intelligence program could be improved and coordinated, and that at the present time there was no one agency responsible for the coordination of the U. S. intelligence effort. At the time of the U-2 incident Zablocki reminded the committee of the various measures pending before that committee on this subject, but agreed with the position of the Chairman that it was not then the appropriate time for consideration of such proposals. He also told the committee that, while there had been intense opposition to the establishment of a joint committee in the past years, present indications are that such strong opposition does not now exist.

5. Mr. Zablocki emphasized that his proposal did not call for an investigation of the Central Intelligence Agency or any other intelligence agency, but rather proposed the establishment of a watchdog committee to determine whether there was proper coordination of intelligence activities and whether the existing intelligence structure was proper. Chairman Smith said that he had been disturbed by events which have occurred in the past, apparently without foreknowledge on the part of this Government. He said it made him wonder whether our intelligence is adequate. Zablocki said that while he was concerned about the conflicting statements which were issued concerning the U-2 incident he was more interested in conducting a review of the structure to determine whether it was adequate. He said he felt all of the various intelligence organizations within the military and elsewhere should remain in existence but felt that a joint committee, established along the lines of a Joint Committee on Atomic Energy could establish a closer liaison between the intelligence activities and the Congress. He said he thought it would be helpful to Mr. Dulles to have such a committee. He added that the Hoover Commission had made specific recommendations on this subject and had noted the absence of any real surveillance of the activities and fiscal accounting of CIA. He said that the CIA is virtually exempt from the general principle of a check of the executive by the legislative branch. Zablocki pointed out that under his resolutions a joint committee would be composed of members of the Armed Services, Appropriations and Foreign Affairs Committees.

6. In the question period, Representative Brown, the ranking Republican member of the committee, took Zablocki to task for referring to recommendations by the Hoover Commission. It was Brown's contention that these were recommendations of a task force of the Commission and not the Commission itself. Brown said he had served on the committee that had established CIA and one of the purposes of the Agency was the coordination of U. S. intelligence activities. He also mentioned that he had been chairman of the subcommittee that had investigated the Bogota situation, and commented on the absurdity of a situation which then existed of having intelligence reports cleared through ambassadors. Brown said he felt Zablocki's proposal was too broad in that it included the FBI and could require testimony on extremely sensitive matters. He also reminded Zablocki of the general feeling of the Speaker against the establishment of joint committees. Mr. Brown also queried Zablocki as to whether he had discussed his proposal with the leaders of the Appropriations Committee, for it was his impression that the ranking

members of the Appropriations Committees made a careful check on the funds expended for intelligence activities. Zablocki replied that he had not discussed his proposal with the leaders of either the Appropriations or Armed Services Committees who, he said, have "predetermined views on this subject." Brown also mentioned that if there was concern as to the conduct of the intelligence effort, the Committee on Government Operations had jurisdiction to look into such a matter.

7. Representative H. Allen Smith raised a number of questions with Zablocki concerning the effect of his measure on the FBI. (Smith stated that he had previously been employed by the Bureau.) He asked Zablocki if he expected such a joint committee would query the Bureau as to its sources. When Zablocki replied in the affirmative, Mr. Smith said he felt this would be a very dangerous practice and could result in leaks and attempts at blackmail against members of the committee staff. Zablocki replied by saying that he felt the problem would be no worse than that confronted by the Joint Committee on Atomic Energy.

8. Representative Hoffman echoed many of the sentiments expressed by Mr. Smith, adding that when the number of people having access to sensitive information increases, the danger of disclosure also increases.

9. The committee will conduct further hearings at some time in the future when other interested Representatives are available to testify.

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